

PEOPLE & THINGS

By ATTICUS

TOmmorow the King and Queen of Sweden will arrive in London on an official State visit. This is the first official visit by any Head of State in the present reign. It is also the first time that King Gustaf VI Adolf and Queen Louise have paid a formal visit to England; informally they have been coming here regularly for many years. Indeed they were married here, in 1933, when his present Majesty was Sweden's Crown Prince, and his bride Lady Louise Mountbatten.

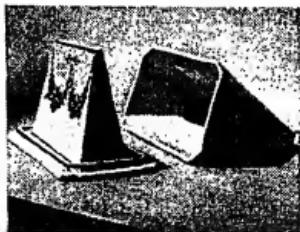
The King is a most unusual sovereign: a scholar of international repute and one of the world's leading specialists on archaeology and early Chinese art. As a result of his journey to Greece in 1920, a great and most rewarding Swedish archaeological expedition went to Asine, with the then Crown Prince as one of its principal members. He was one of the experts who planned and organised London's great Chinese Exhibition in 1936.

Scholar-King

"I AM married to a professor," Queen Louise likes to say jokingly. Indeed, if His Majesty wanted to exchange his royal responsibilities for a quiet career, he would have no difficulty in securing a University Chair or a museum curatorship. Characteristically he has turned the vast sum of money collected through national subscription as a present on his sixtieth birthday into a fund for the promotion of Swedish culture, and he personally examines all applications for grants.

Long before his father died in 1950 at the age of ninety-two, he had gradually passed on to the Crown Prince most of the royal duties: these include chairmanship at Cabinet meetings and the presidency of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament. The latter function was one of the few the aged King had insisted on exercising almost to the end. "The boy does not understand foreign affairs," he would say. The "boy" at that time was rising seventy.

Actually, the King is extremely well versed in international affairs; his knowledge is based on travel, reading and world-wide personal contacts. He rises at eight and reads three newspapers before breakfast—one of which is always a London paper.



An Inscrutable Object

A MORE or less distinguished friend of mine who up to the age of forty-eight had not collected even a stamp or a bird's egg suddenly took it into his head last year to make a definitive collection of Wedgwood jelly-moulds, and he now has eight, which I am not particularly surprised to learn is the largest collection of these objects in private hands.

My friend is undismayed by the indifference displayed towards his collection by his friends, and by the absence of public acclaim for his achievement, and I assume the eccentric pleasure he derives from the grave distinction of their appearance, the exquisite banality of their original purpose, and their rather farcical name are his reward.

Conversation Piece

THE purpose of the jelly-mould was to decorate the centre of the late eighteenth-century dining-room table. The transparent jelly was poured into the cover and the mould was then pressed down into it. When the jelly had set, the cover was removed and the mould placed upright in the centre of the table, where the guests admired the painted flowers in the translucent depths of the jelly.

They were the ancestors of those objects advertised in American magazines as making "interesting conversation pieces."

The moulds were made in the famous Wedgwood cream and later in pearl ware and were sent to Chelsea to be hand-painted. They are about six and a half inches high and their base is about nine inches by four. Apart from the one shown here the only other specimen complete with cover is in the Wedgwood Museum in Wigmore Street.

Steel Hat Fashions

WHEN I heard that the War Office were at long last planning improvements in the steel hat, I gratefully telephoned Mr. Sidney Rogerson, who is the most helpful P.R.O. in Whitehall, although to the apparent dismay of the Commons he is not paid any salary by the State.

He revealed that it is, alas, only the internal harness of the hat which is to be redesigned. It will be tightened so that headaches will be worse, but Commanding Officers will be spared the sight of their troops holding their hats on as they charge the enemy.

It would be an exaggeration to say that our steel hat is paramount only as a domestic utensil, but in battle it certainly cannot compare with the German helmet or with the American, which is more com-

fortable but less sturdy than the German. Our hat does not even feel as if it afforded shelter and its discomfort is notorious.

Gone With the Wind

THE only thing I like about it is the story of King George V inspecting the Household Cavalry. In the course of the parade the C.O.'s steel hat blew off in a gust of wind and whirled daintily away across the parade ground.

Recovered, the hat was found to be sturdily built of cardboard and to contain the name of Clarkson's theatrical costumiers.

The C.O. incurred the grave displeasure not only of His Majesty but more especially of his brother officers for having kept the secret to himself.

"Hump"

I WAS privileged the other evening to meet the young man who was described to me by an authority on the subject as "the only non-American jazz musician of any importance at all."

Pennants and evergreens bedecked the rooftop garden in the Charing Cross Road in which Mr. Humphrey Lyttelton and his band were commemorating the appearance of Mr. Lyttelton's memoirs. Having bought his first trumpet ("a de luxe streamlined Manhattan") while playing truant from Lord's at the age of fifteen, Mr. Lyttelton has followed a path of his own ever since.

Ignorant as I am of the simplest harmonic progression, I was delighted to learn that he cannot sight-read music, finds this no inconvenience, and contends that "by far the greater proportion of the world's music is produced by musicians who have no knowledge whatever of the absurdly complicated European system of musical notation."

Someone more forward than myself asked Mr. Lyttelton how he got on with his cousin, the Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs. "People often ask me," he replied, "if he approves of my activities. They never ask me if I approve of his."

Water in the Blood

I SUPPOSE rowing runs in the blood more freely than does any other sport, and this year Henley is, as usual, scattered with the chips of old oars.

Coaching the Thames Grand Eight is A. L. Sulley, who coxed Cambridge against Oxford in 1928 and 1929 when Cambridge won by ten and seven lengths respectively. In 1929 he coached the Newham Women's Eight, fell in love with their cox and married her. Today their son, James, is cox of the Radley Eight.

P. D. Rickett, who is rowing six for Eton, is the son of Harold Rickett, chairman of the Henley Stewards. Robin Raikes, rowing for Merton, is the fifth of his family to gain an Oxford Blue. Raikes and Rickett senior are both coaching this week.

Number four in the Radley boat is W. Rathbone, whose father rowed for Oxford in 1926 and 1927. H. R. A. (Jumbo) Edwards, who won three Henley finals in one day and two Olympic finals on another, has a son at Christ Church who won his first cup at Reading two weeks ago.

Memo to W.S.M.

A SWISS bibliophile recently acquired a presentation copy of Flaubert's "Madame Bovary," in which the author had written, "L'amour est comme l'Opéra. On s'y ennuie, mais on y retourne."